

Histon & Impington Village Design Guide

Supplementary Planning Document Adopted
September 2020

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Aerial photograph of Histon & Impington with highlight of the boundary of the village as defined for the purposes of the Neighbourhood Plan and Design Guide.

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Foreword

South Cambridgeshire is a district of diverse and distinctive villages, as well as being a high growth area. South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) wants new development to maintain and enhance the special character of our villages, and for communities to be at the heart of the planning process to help achieve this.

This is supported through our Local Plan which places good design at the heart of its vision for achieving sustainable growth:

Local Plan – Policy S/1: Vision

South Cambridgeshire will continue to be the best place to live, work and study in the country. Our district will demonstrate impressive and sustainable economic growth. Our residents will have a superb quality of life in an exceptionally beautiful, rural and green environment.

In 2018, the Council was awarded funding from the Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government to develop exemplar village design guidance, working in collaboration with village communities undergoing significant growth and change, in order to develop locally specific design guidance.

In line with our key objective of putting our customers at the centre of everything we do, we are delighted to have worked with representatives who live and work in these communities, to produce this exemplary design guidance to improve the quality of new developments in our villages.

We look forward to seeing a new generation of locally distinctive, high quality schemes that show the influence of this Village Design Guide.

Cllr. Dr. Tumi Hawkins
Lead Cabinet Member for Planning

Acknowledgements

The Histon & Impington Village Design Guide has been prepared by the Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service and URBAN Silence, and developed in collaboration with the village community, through a process of active community participation and consultation.

SCDC is grateful to Sue Lee for leading the village steering group for the Village Design Guide project and acting as community project champion.



1. Introduction

Purpose and scope of this document

As a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), the Histon & Impington Village Design Guide has been prepared to amplify and build on the requirements set out within policy **HQ/1: Design Principles** in the adopted 2018 Local Plan, and other policies within the Local Plan which relate to the built and landscape character, heritage and distinctiveness of South Cambridgeshire.

This Village Design Guide SPD:

- Supports South Cambridgeshire's policy that seeks to secure high quality design for all new developments, with a clear and positive contribution to the local and wider context.
- Describes the distinctive character of the village, and those aspects of its built and natural environment that the community most value
- Sets out clear design principles to guide future development proposals in and around the village of Fulbourn.
- Is intended as a user-friendly tool for planners, developers, designers and community members.

The Fulbourn Village Design Guide SPD forms a material consideration in determining planning applications for developments within the village.

Who should use this document

The Histon & Impington Village Design Guide should be read by:

- Developers, property owners and their designers, in considering potential development proposals.
- Development management officers in assessing the suitability and determination of planning applications.
- Statutory and non-statutory consultees, including the parish council and members of the public, in commenting on planning applications.

The Village Design Guide should give confidence to all parties involved with the planning and design process, that they understand the essential character of the village, and how to respond to this appropriately through design. This will lead to better quality, more locally distinctive development that is welcomed by local residents and contributes positively to the sustainability of the village.

2. About the village

The village of Histon & Impington is located just north of Cambridge. The Impington Parish boundary straddles the A14, but the village is considered to be only the settlement located to the north of the A14: this is the area covered by this Design Guide. Originally formed by two Parishes with scattered development, Histon & Impington is now a single large settlement, with no real internal boundaries. It has a population nearing 8,000 people, and it is larger than most villages, but yet it retains its own individual character, more typical of a village than of a suburban area or satellite: is it compact and surrounded by fields and open countryside, it is clearly separated from Cambridge by the A14, fields and distinctive development patterns: low rise, with a diverse mix of houses, abundant tall trees typical of the countryside and a well defined high street and green at the heart of the community.

Development started around three areas (see Fig. 9), corresponding to the clusters around the two churches of St Andrew's and later the Chivers Jam Factory near the former rail station, opened in 1847. Today the village offers an attractive mix ranging from the thatched roof cottages, to the Chivers' workers' cottages of the last century, through to art deco housing and more recent small scale estate development. Interestingly, post war development was substantial, but did not result in the uniform estates typical of the time, as expansion took the form of additions of small groups of houses within an overall pattern of residential streets.

The main historic core and conservation area of the village is in Histon and extends from St Andrew's Church in the north along High Street, to the areas around The Green. It has buildings of different periods mixed together along narrow winding streets, with mature trees and field ditches feeding the brook running through the village green.

A second conservation area lies in the eastern part of the village along Impington Lane where a more rural character dominates with

paddocks, trees and hedges still present in between buildings (Fig. 15). By the 1940s, the built-up area extended to include development at Saffron Road, Narrow Lane, Mill Lane and Park Lane.

Significant expansion took place with the construction of the A14 and of Bridge Road / B1049, which opened up land to the east of the village: the number of houses doubled from 1,200 in 1951 to almost 2,400 in 1981. By the 1980s almost the entire area east of Bridge Road was built over, with ribbon development extending further north, south, and east on the roads to Cottenham, Cambridge, and Milton. The old Chivers Jam factory was replaced by the current factory and the original site redeveloped as Vision Park in the early 1980s. The business park hosts around 2,000 jobs in research, IT and agro-science; the jam factory, now owned by Hain Daniels, still is a significant local employer.

Key characteristics of the village include:

- A vibrant High Street with a broad range of shops, pubs and community facilities
- The Green, with its brook and big trees, fronted by a mix of detached thatched and whitewashed houses
- Emerging second 'centre' around the former station, where new development has been approved
- The extensive historic areas and many Listed Buildings of different periods
- Enclosed fields, paddocks and allotments forming a transition between the village and open countryside
- Smock windmill and adjoining residential areas with many attractive houses and mature landscape
- Frequent tree groups and woodland contributing to the streetscene
- The tree vista across the Impington countryside just north of the A14
- The parkland landscape of the grounds of Histon Manor to west.

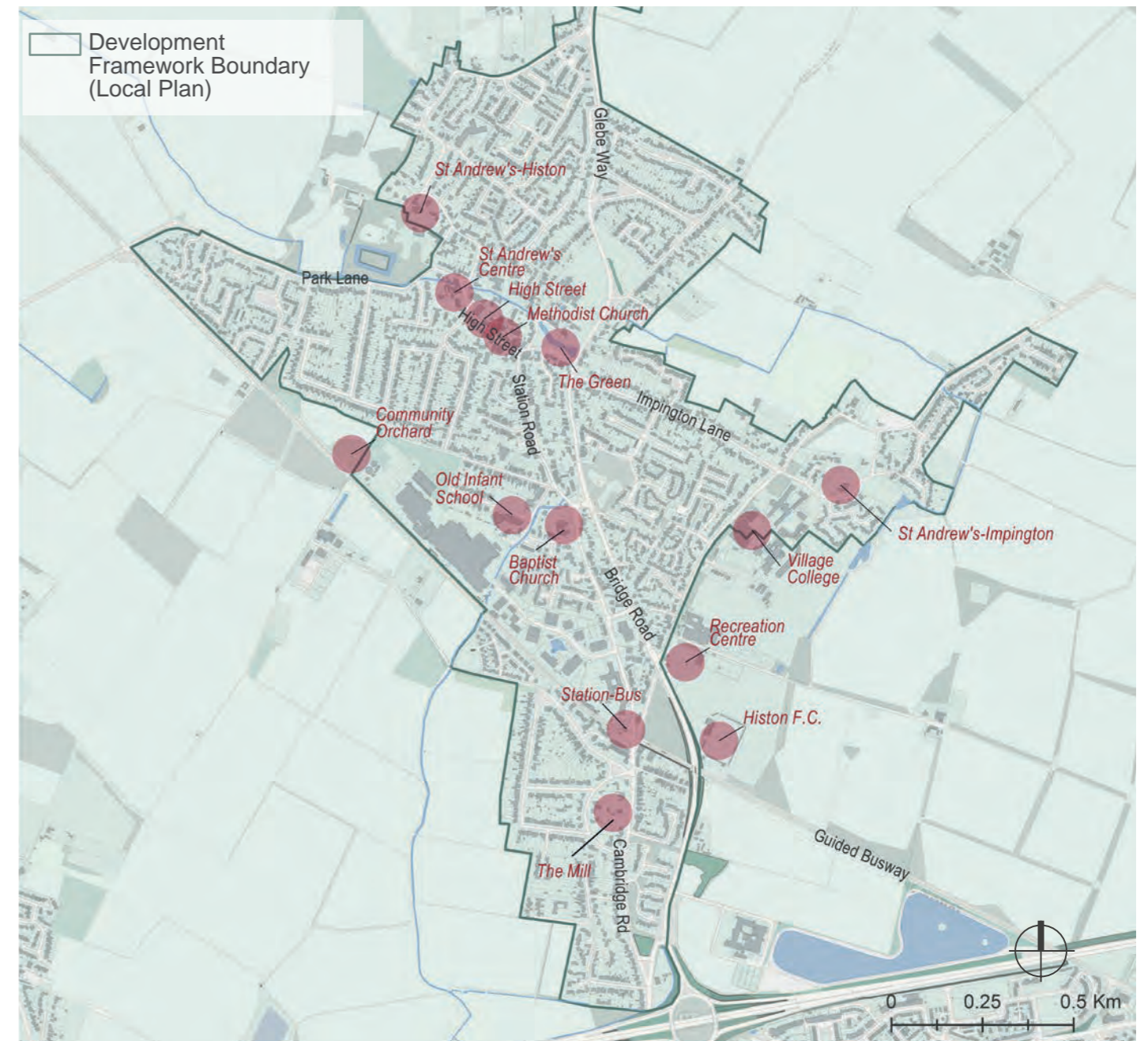


Fig. 1 - The village and key local landmarks (excluding Parish area south of A14, considered to be part of the edge of Cambridge)

Histon and Impington:

- is entirely enclosed within the Green Belt of Cambridge
- is classed as a Major Rural Centre in the Local Plan
- has an emerging Neighbourhood Plan

Population

7,866

Estimate, for Design Guide area only

Conservation Area

130ha

Equivalent to 22% of the area of the village

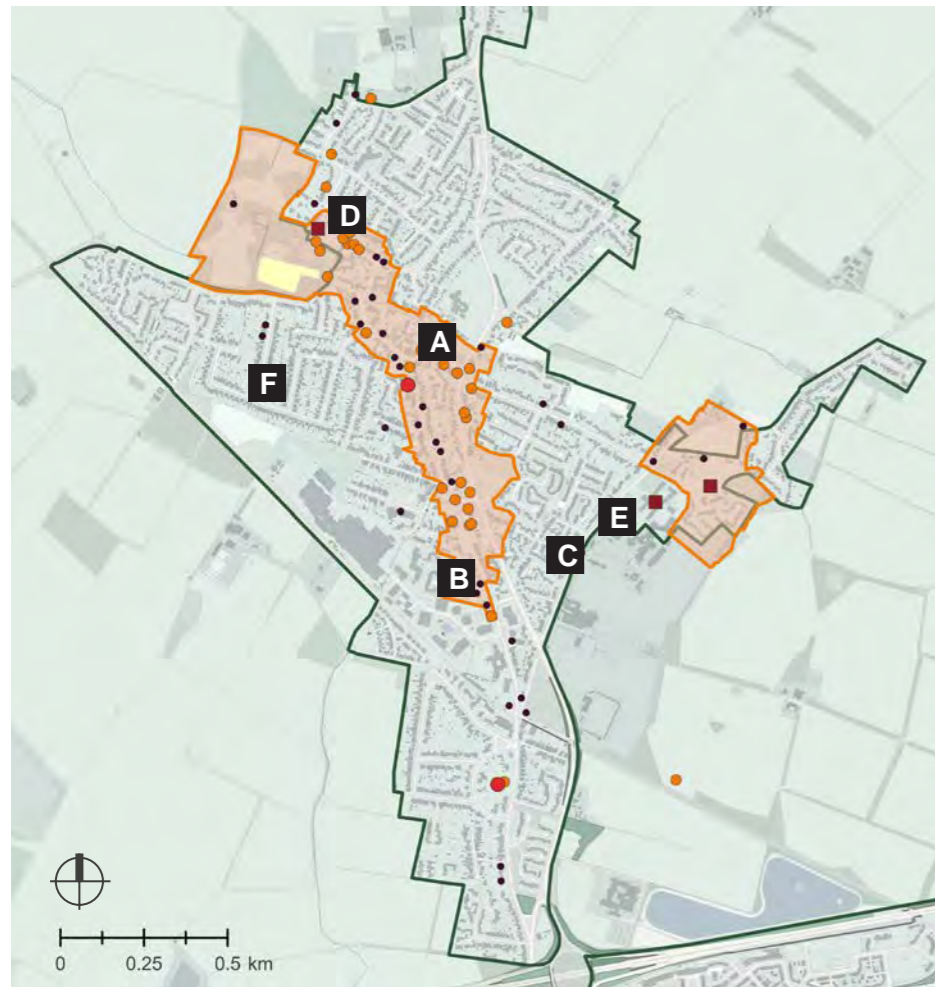


Fig. 2 - A large historic core and many interesting buildings

- Listed Grade I
- Listed Grade II*
- Listed Grade II
- Interesting Buildings (Neighbourhood Plan)
- Scheduled Ancient Monument
- Conservation Area
- Green Belt Boundary

Development Plan designations can be subject to change over time. Please refer to the Local Plan pages of SDC's website for up to date information.



Fig. 3 - Farmhouses now at the core of the village, on the Green (A)



Fig. 4 - Exuberant Victorian building near Saffron Road (B)



Fig. 5 - Interesting 1920-30 houses along New Road (C)



Fig. 6 - Old cottages around St Andrews in Histon (D)



Fig. 7 - Impington Village College Gropius Hall, a visionary architectural and educational initiative of the 1930s (E)



Fig. 8 - 1930s semi-detached houses in Park Lane (F)



Fig. 9 - Progression of development

3. Community input

The Village Design Guide seeks to capture how the community sees the village, what people would like to improve over time, and how new development can make a significant contribution to Histon & Impington and its unique qualities. In particular, the Design Guide seeks to reflect local aspirations for innovative and contemporary design that is appropriate to the village setting and expands the richness of the local built environment, of which the community is proud. Direction for the Village Design Guide was provided by a Steering Group of 5-6 people representing various roles within the village, including two members of the Parish Council and members of the Neighbourhood Plan Group. The work included guided tours through the village, participation in study tours, direct provision of photos, text and mapped contents as well as reviews of all drafts in detail.

The Village Design Guide is intended to complement the Neighbourhood Plan, which is being prepared at the same time. Dialogue with the wider community was shared with the consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan: a drop-in session at the village library was followed by an evening presentation and a session for people to provide direct input and feedback, attended by over 60 people. To encourage discussion around what people value within the village and identify what they would like to see more of and what they feel inappropriate, sheets of photos from the village and comparable places were used. These provided a base for discussion, but also a record of people's opinions.

Every village has its own unique character and assets which are valued by the local community. Histon & Impington is no exception: it is a vibrant and diverse community with an excellent range of services and facilities. Community members recognise that the village has an important relationship with Cambridge, but at the same time, they value their individuality: the community spirit, the connections with the countryside, the compact scale, the high number of jobs and services offered in the village - and especially the diversity of buildings and the richness in fine detailing of buildings of various periods of history. Many of these buildings have 'stories to tell', which people cherish.

The community is therefore keen that development proposals recognise the features which make the villages special and enhance the character of the local area and landscape. This is also supported in the policies in the emerging Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan, which the Village Design Guide aims to take further by offering guidance on specific design issues.

The local community has expressed clear views about what the Village Design Guide should help strengthen going forward:

- The cohesion of the settlement, which is compact and focused on two focal areas: the High Street and The Green on one hand and the area around the station, which has the potential to become a second village centre.
- The building styles and materials which reflect the range of styles of different historic periods of growth of the village; this is confirmed by the extensive Conservation Area, the high number of Listed Buildings and the identification of 'Interesting Buildings' as non-designated heritage assets in the Neighbourhood Plan - it is hoped that future development will enhance this legacy, with a new layer of innovative and well-built architecture.
- The rural setting of the settlement, evident from the views along the approach roads, such as Cottenham Road, Glebe Way and Milton Road, as well as the open setting of the area of Old Impington.
- The strong relationship to the countryside - the footpath connections, trees and 'natural' green spaces within the village, with their rich ecology and wildlife.
- The consistency of building heights and use of local materials and detailing, such as red brick decorations or interesting roof lines or windows (Fig. 67, 74-76).
- The character and appearance of existing residential areas through improvements to streetscape and existing property frontages and front gardens, ensuring that changes to existing properties will add to the richness of local character and distinctiveness.
- The possibility to walk and cycle everywhere, with many paths and short cuts within the village, and further improvement to the street environment and safety across all areas.
- The green spaces and the village green which provide big trees, seating and meeting points and the field drains within the village, which feature attractively on several paths along Station Road, Park Lane and by the High Street.

Other priorities which sit outside the Village Design Guide include:

- The need to retain and increase the provision of community facilities such as the Library and create additional facilities.
- Protection of the High Street, local services and mix of uses including employment and local retail.
- Affordability of housing and provision of a range of housing types in particular smaller units.
- The need to expand and improve the maintenance of the network of footpaths.



Fig. 10 - The Green is a local landmark and destination



Fig. 11 - The ancient church of St Andrews in Impington



Fig. 12 - Attractive new residential areas at Merrington Place



Fig. 13 - Surprising peaceful corners in busy areas of the High Street



Fig. 14 - Traditional cottages at Station Road

4. Village character

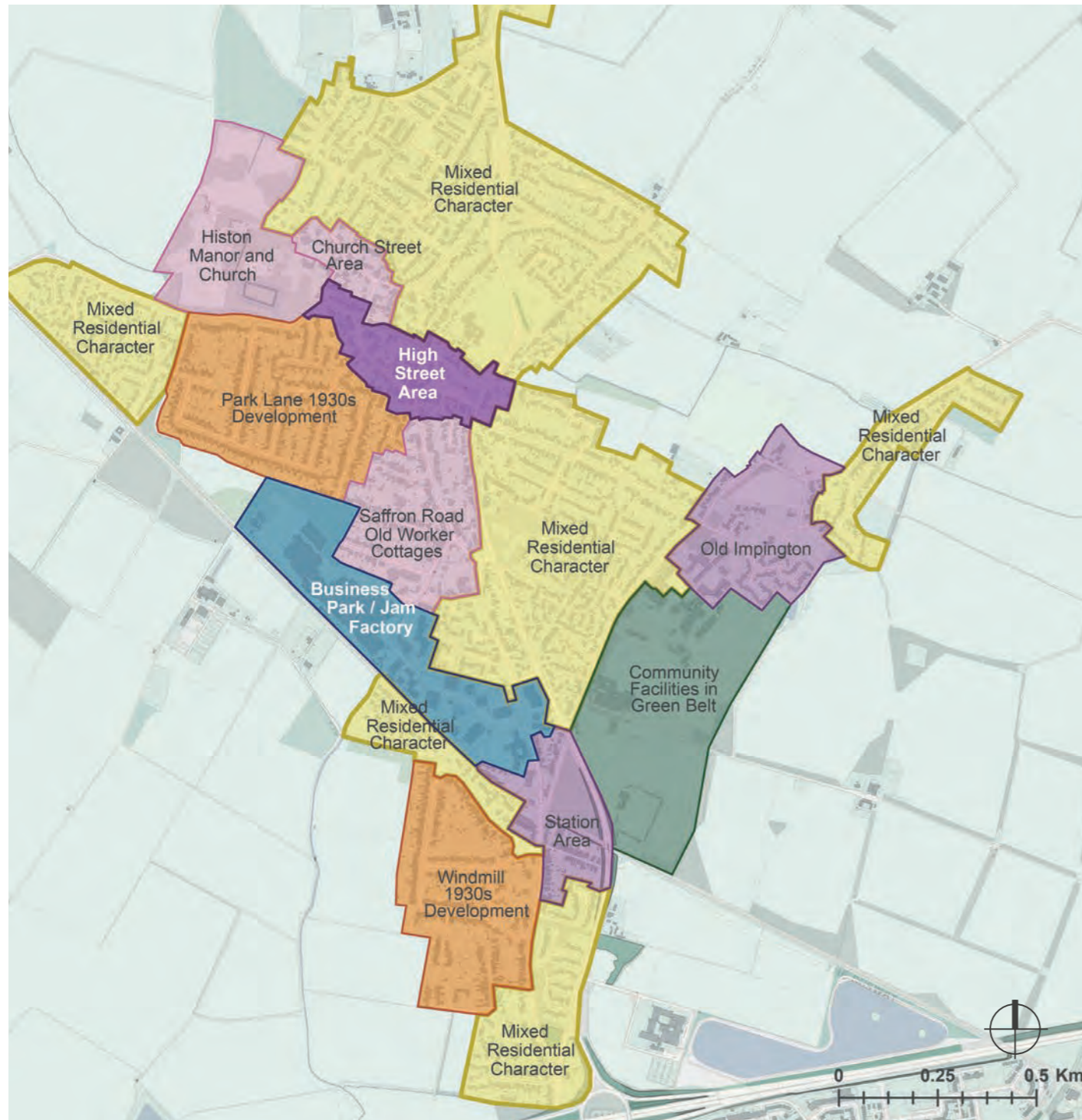


Fig. 15 - A village with a varied character and many special places

The village of Histon & Impington has no overall uniform image and visual identity. The High Street, with its mix of building periods and styles - some attractive, some functional - is a reflection of what happens elsewhere: the character of the village derives more from its consistent low scale, relative compactness and variety of buildings, some with very fine detailing and forms typical of their time.

The majority of the village has a mixed residential character, with small groups of houses of similar design, often limited to a handful along a street, or a short cul-de-sac, typically with generous landscaping. The village community feels that the richness of the settlement is in the variety of streets and buildings, the lack of large groups of uniform design, the fine detailing at architectural level, and the exuberant landscape intermixed within the houses and mature trees that can grow over the roof line.

The nature of the village is also reinforced by its compactness where everything is within walk or cycle distance and by the proximity and immediate access to the countryside, with localised open views out (at Old Impington and towards Cottenham), the woodland-style planting and the field ditches.

High Street Area



Fig. 16

The High Street and The Green are the functional and visual heart of the village, where shops, community services and pubs are mainly found. They form part of the village Conservation Area. Change will take place gradually and over time, as buildings adapt to new uses and occupiers (see Section 7). It is characterised by:

- Commercial, community and residential buildings of different periods and styles, from thatched cottages to 1960s functional commercial buildings
- Low rise, typically two storey buildings, with attractive roof lines and irregular frontage alignments
- A busy winding road, where traffic is significant and at times overwhelming for pedestrians and cyclists
- Majestic mature trees on The Green, which has a coherent historic feel with its brook, whitewashed cottages and a busy playground.



Fig. 17

Station Area



Fig. 18



Fig. 19

This was once the centre of the commercial life of the village, around the Chivers Jam factory. It is now an important crossroads and the location of the Guided Busway link to Cambridge & Huntingdon. A pub, the old station building and a few shops front directly onto the crossroads. This area is in the process of changing as older industrial sites are being redeveloped (see Section 7). It is:

- A natural focal point of activity within the village
- The main bus and cycling gateway to the village, linking to Cambridge and north Cambridgeshire
- A location with empty sites and underused public realm, which could provide an attractive setting for new activities and improved spaces for waiting and meeting
- Historic areas are mixed with more recent buildings (industry and Vision Park) forming an area of varied character, and innovative (low rise) architecture should be encouraged.

Histon Manor and Church Street



Fig. 20

This is the original core of Histon and part of the Conservation Area, along a former route to Ely and developed around St Andrew's Church and the Manor. It is characterised by:

- Winding lanes with narrow pavements
- Thatched cottages set at the back of the pavement, mixed with attractive traditional brick buildings
- Occasional infill development set within parkland style landscape
- Low brick walls, picket fences and low hedges defining most front gardens, with tall trees in between buildings
- Visual intrusion of unattractive road signage and basic street lighting.

Old Impington



Fig. 21



Fig. 22

Unlike most of the village, which is compact, this area has an open structure of buildings and small fields. It includes Impington Village College, which has a campus style among parkland, and the Church of St Andrew's with its traditional green setting. This open character is unique in the settlement and should be protected for the future, as an essential element of the Conservation Area. Other characteristics are:

- Winding lanes in between buildings and open fields, with an attractive sweeping bend around the church grounds
- Deep set backs with green land and clusters of trees separating roads and buildings
- A mix of buildings of different periods, styles and functions
- Infill development in the form of small groups of houses separated by fields.

Saffron Road Workers' Cottages



Fig. 23



Fig. 24

Saffron Road cottages were built in Victorian times behind the more valuable Station Road frontages to provide accommodation for the Chivers' workers. In line with the progressive thinking of the time, development included a school (Fig. 24) and other benevolent facilities. Although the area is mostly outside the Conservation Area of the village (with the exception of the Station Road frontages), its quality is mainly in the consistent design of the buildings and street:

- The cottages are fine examples of elegant simplicity and compact houses (Fig. 23); their coherent frontages, red brick detailing and shallow front gardens create a very attractive dense street
- In other streets, buildings are set back, with green verges and tree planting, creating pocket community groups
- Recent development of three-storey apartments forms a gated cluster by the jam factory.

Park Lane / Park Avenue 1930's Development



Fig. 25

The area south of Park Lane was subdivided for development in the 1930s, using a linear grid of streets, which created long rows of houses with deep front and back gardens. The buildings developed over the course of more than 20 years, resulting in a great variety of styles:

- Linear grid of streets, with consistent large plot sizes with a relatively wide frontage
- Linear rows of large two storey detached or semi-detached houses, with a mix of styles and detailing, such as the attractive art deco curved windows (Fig 66), the red brick trims, and variety of roof styles, including 1930s flat roofs.
- The typical low wall and hedge delineation of the front gardens has largely been lost to provide off-street parking space to the detriment of the quality of the whole area

Windmill 1930's Development



Fig. 26



Fig. 27

Development of this area also commenced in the 1930s, and it comprises a predominantly landscaped curving street around the windmill (The Crescent) and a grid of three linear streets. Built more rapidly than the Park Lane area, it displays some uniformity of architecture within each street:

- Deep plots, with a relatively narrow frontage along the linear streets, where the majority of houses are semi-detached or short terraces, and single units set in parkland along the Crescent
- Strong geometric forms, occasional attractive detailing and steep roofs
- Hedges originally used to frame the deep front gardens could be reinstated to reduce the visual impact of parking
- Occasional redevelopment and extensions have added variety over time, with some elegant contemporary designs

Mixed Residential Character



Fig. 28



Fig. 29

The majority of post war development has taken the form of small estates and small groups of similar houses along short streets and cul-de-sacs.

- Most of the development of the 1960s and 70s (after the construction of the A14 and Bridge Road) is of suburban character, but in some cases with a distinctive character which should be respected and strengthened
- As development took place in small groups of units, the monotony and uniformity of suburban extensions has been avoided
- More recent development adopted local materials and detailing, such as the red brick patterns, the wall boundary and the planting of trees and hedges
- In locations such as Merrington Place, design included screening the car parking and a robust landscape framework, with species that encourage variety and wildlife

Business Park and Jam Factory



Fig. 30

The business park is an enclave of buildings of completely different character and scale from the rest of the village and separated from it:

- Buildings are mainly large functional office boxes, typically three storey high, surrounded by car parks
- The main group of buildings are set around a small decorative lake in parkland which provides a link to the character of the village
- Use of English woodland trees and public art by local artists add distinctiveness
- Better integration of landscape, pedestrian and cycle routes would improve integration with the village

5. Enhancing access and relationship with the countryside

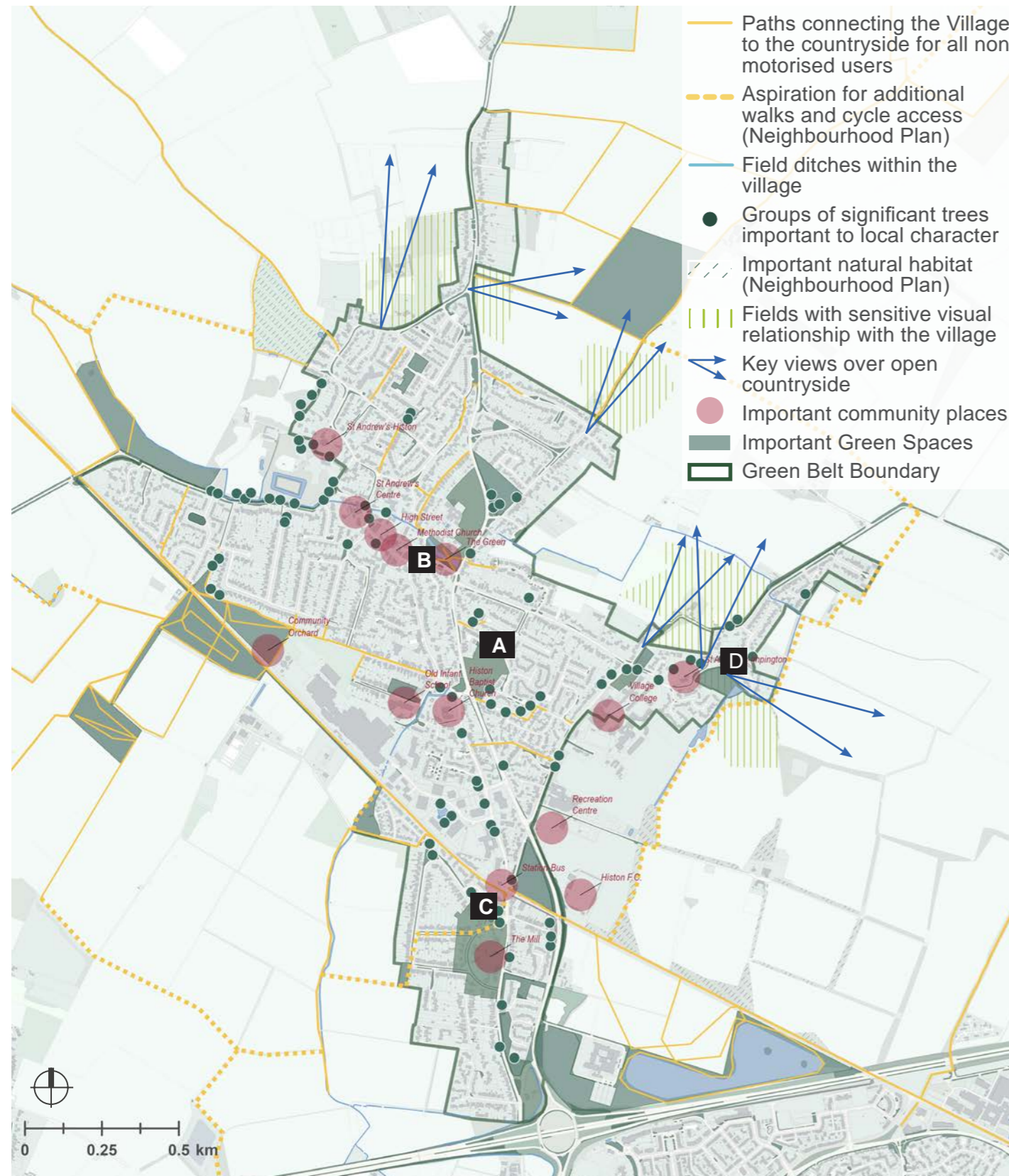


Fig. 31 - A close relationship with the countryside through extensive network of footpaths, key views and tall trees and woodland-style landscape within the village

The setting of the village comprises a flat and low lying open landscape containing irregularly shaped arable fields, subdivided by occasional hedgerows and a network of drainage ditches. The semi-urban landscape to the south of the A14 is complemented by open view across the Impington fields, creating a clear separation from Cambridge. The landscape character around the edges of the village is that of enclosed farmland, paddocks and mature hedgerows dominating many of the northern boundaries. The community places great value on the relationship of the village to the countryside and appreciate the presence of rural style landscape inside the village.

Design Guidance:

- 5.1** Improve access and provide additional paths for all non-motorised users (equestrians, cyclists, pedestrians and others) between the village and countryside
- 5.2** Protect open views over sensitive fields (Fig. 31) where the countryside comes into contact with the village
- 5.3** Avoid hard edges to development and create a 'soft' transition between the village and countryside through landscaping and tree planting
- 5.4** Retain and provide new areas of natural green space and enhanced biodiversity including corridors suited for wildlife
- 5.5** Enhance the setting of field drains inside the village so they can be better appreciated.



Fig. 32 - Homefield Park brings woodland into the village (A)



Fig. 33 - The Brook in The Green is part of the wider drainage system of Histon (B)



Fig. 34 - Groups of tall trees on a verge make the village special (C)

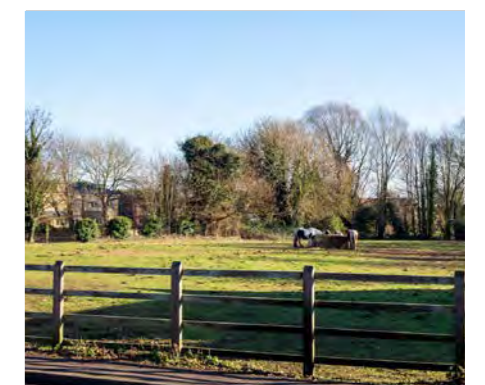


Fig. 35 - Countryside within the village at Burgoyne's Road (D)

6. An active village

The village boasts over 300 service and business premises located in the village. The range is very broad: from a selection of shops and facilities in the High Street, to consumer-orientated small businesses dispersed throughout, to international-scale internet companies and agro science in Vision Park.

Various churches, the library and other social clubs support community life, together with schools, a village college and healthcare facilities.

Activity and employment within the village are an essential feature of the character of Histon & Impington. This contributes to the creation of a vibrant and sustainable community where opportunities for living, working and enjoying life locally are possible. Activity and employment also contribute to the individuality of the village, which has strong interrelationship with Cambridge, but not dependence.

Business activity makes a positive contribution to the life and character of the village, provided it respects the scale and environment of the village.

Design Guidance:

- 6.1 The design of non-residential development should take full account of the constraints of the local context (scale, massing and materials) and establish positive relationships to the village and countryside
- 6.2 Contemporary architecture with fine grain detailing is welcomed; 'box' development is not acceptable as it does not contribute to the character and quality of the village
- 6.3 Multi-unit developments should be designed as small groupings of buildings, with exceptional landscape and excellent integration with the village and countryside
- 6.4 There should be strong emphasis on cycling (routes and parking facilities) and pedestrian access to bus services and the Guided Busway
- 6.5 Provision of car parking should be away from the street frontage, well landscaped with hedgerows and trees.

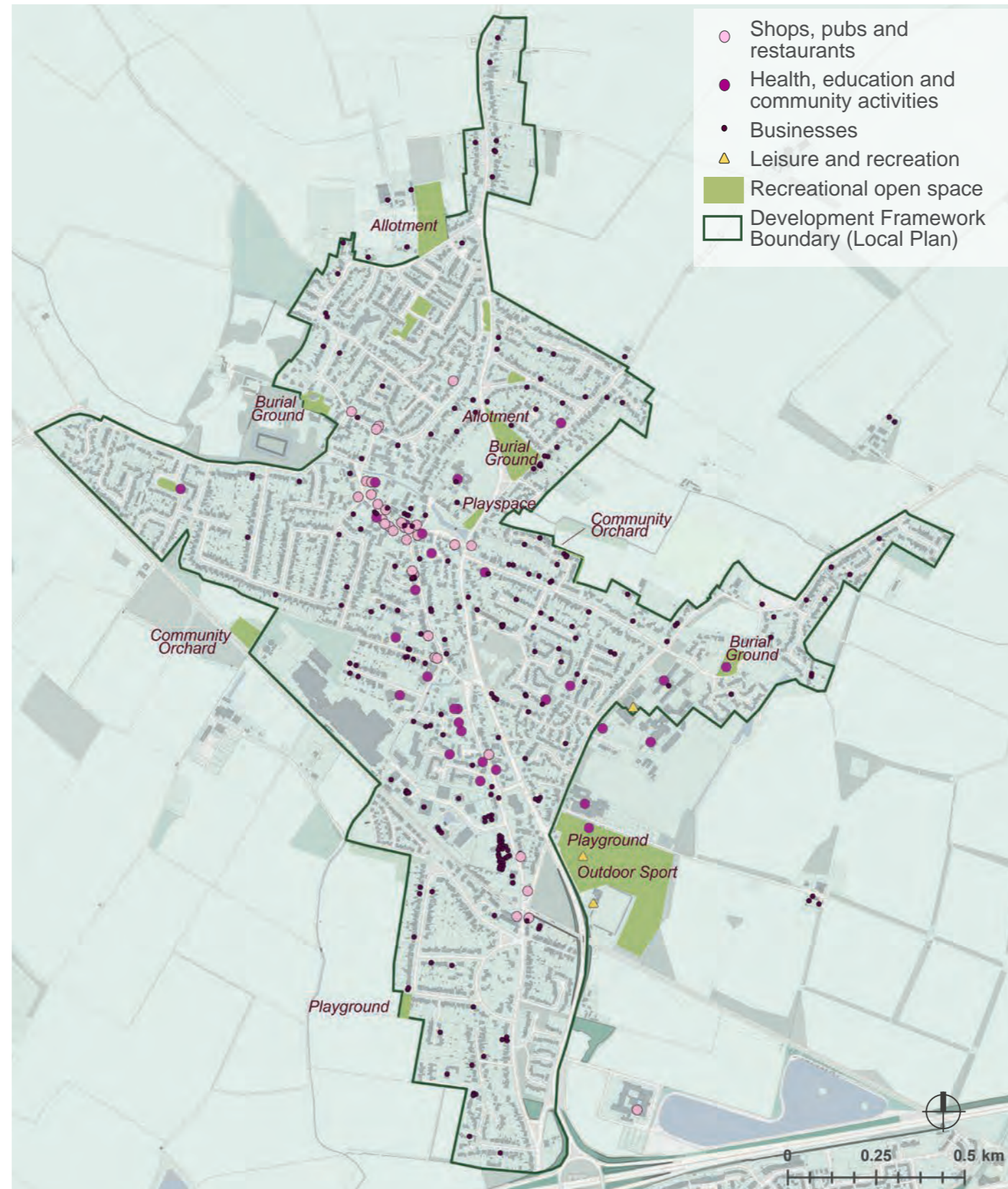


Fig. 36 - The village offers plenty of activities and a range of employment



Fig. 37 - The High Street offers a larger mix of shops than most villages



Fig. 38 - Functional business units at Vision Park to be better integrated



Fig. 39 - Direct link to Cambridge via the Guided Busway

7. Strengthening the village centres

High Street and School Hill Site

The High Street area (see Section 4 for a description) has a distinctive character with a mix of buildings and activities: shops, pubs, community facilities, businesses, homes and a well-used playground. This makes this part of the historic core of Histon very lively and the undisputed heart of the village. The whole area is part of the Conservation Area and includes several Listed Buildings and non-designated interesting buildings recognised by the Neighbourhood Plan. The street environment, however, is in need of improvement.

The School Hill site is central to the life of the village, as it hosts the library, a large supermarket and several shops. The library is distinct as a secular building and cherished community facility administered by the County Council, open to all and free, offering much more than books to borrow. There are story-times for the very young through to computer buddies, afternoon tea and talks for the elderly. It has natural light, dual aspect and easy access from bus stops, cycling and car parking.

It is considered that redevelopment will provide a unique opportunity to improve a very important part of the High Street, and uplift an otherwise functional, but not very attractive set of buildings.

Design Guidance:

- 7.1a** Development within the High Street area should respect the historic character of the Conservation Area, especially in terms of building height, massing and materials
- 7.2a** Attractive and continuous retail or active frontages should be included wherever possible
- 7.3a** Building height along the street should generally be limited to that of the surrounding buildings (2 storeys) although 3 storey development may be acceptable set back from the road frontage
- 7.4a** Existing green spaces and groups of mature trees should be retained and the streetscape improved, adding public seating pedestrian-scale lighting and public art where appropriate
- 7.5a** Any development should contribute to the creation of a more pedestrian and cycle friendly environment.
- 7.6a** Large parking areas should be screened from views from the High Street, while cycle parking should be prominent and generous
- 7.7a** Opportunities to improve and highlight the field ditch to the north of the High Street should be considered.

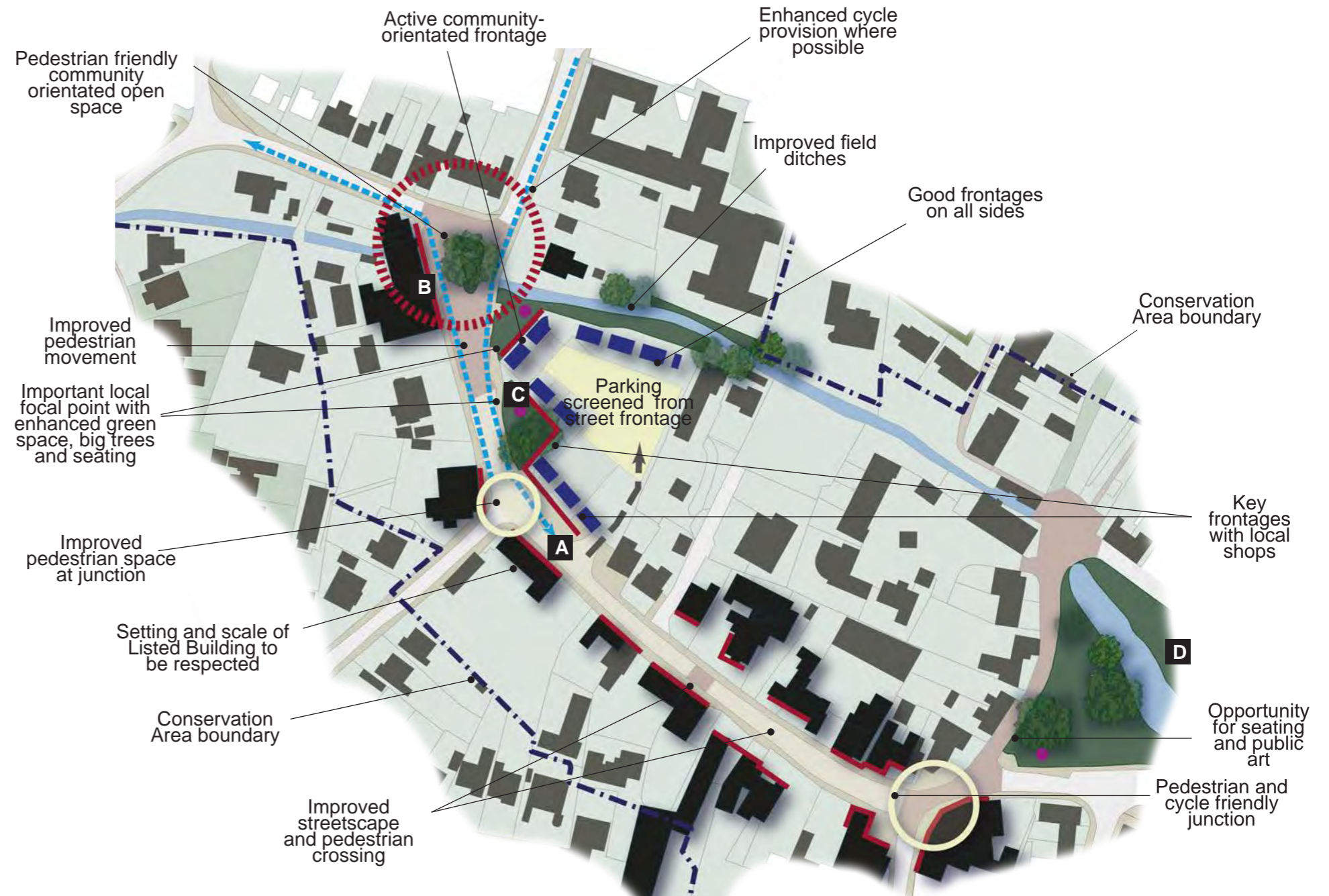


Fig. 40 - The streetscape of the High Street is in need of upgrade (A)



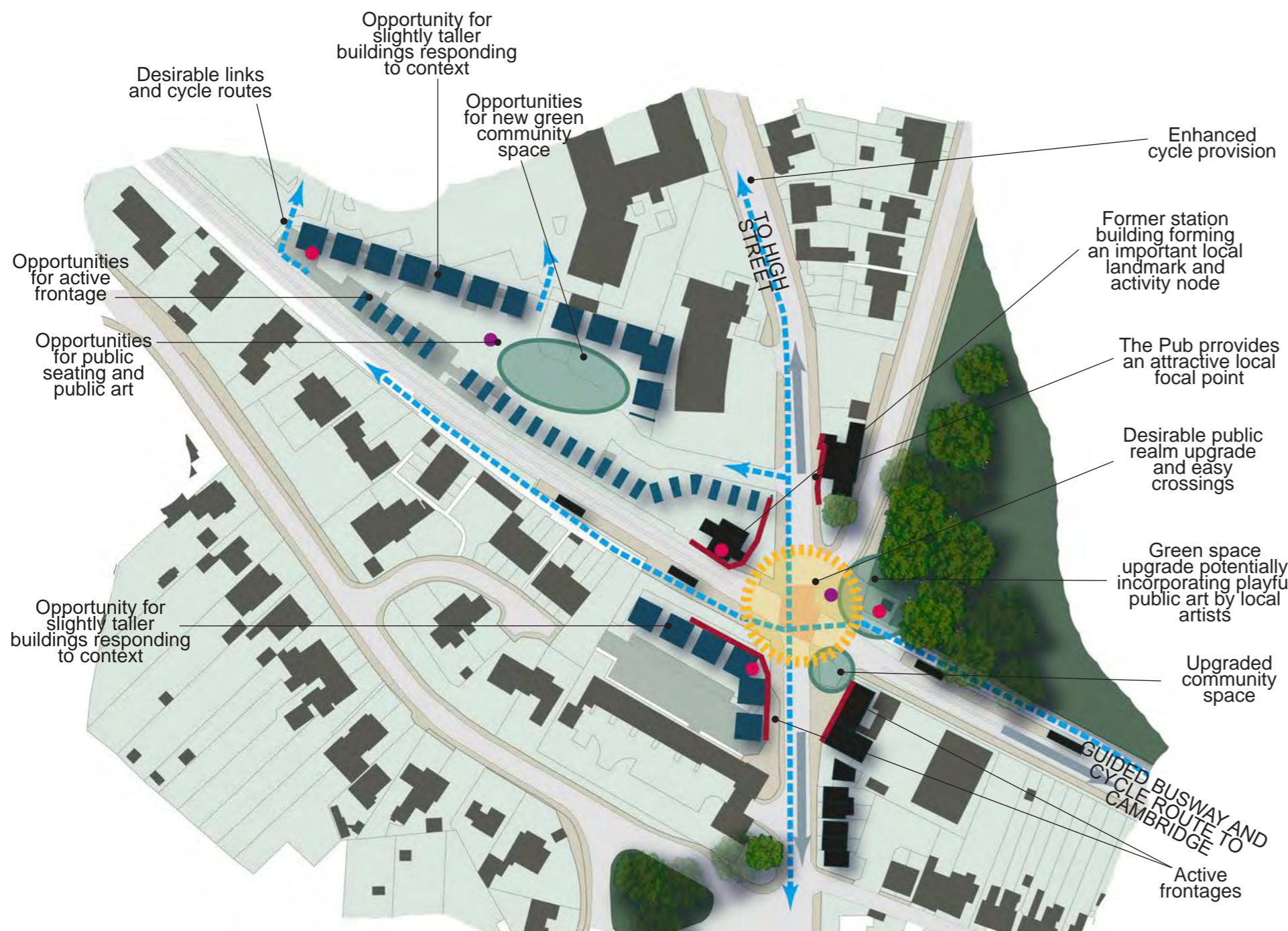
Fig. 41 - Contemporary detailing add quality to traditional forms (B)



Fig. 42 - Green space in front of the shops is very important (C)



Fig. 43 - Playing, sitting and meeting spaces are in high demand (D)



Histon & Impington Station Area

Several sites around the Histon & Impington Station Area (see Section 4 for a description) are proposed for redevelopment with the potential to create an attractive second local centre well located in relation to public transport facilities and serving the community at the southern end of the village.

The location is one of the early groupings of development in the village, linked to the railways and commercial development and production, with the first Chivers jam factory located here. The former station building and Railway Vue public house are local landmarks reminiscent of that past. Although not listed, they are identified as 'Interesting Buildings' in the Neighbourhood Plan, because they contribute to the image and vitality of the area. The wooded area nearby, known as the Copse, and the small open spaces create great opportunities to reinforce the local public realm as a place to meet, wait and shop.

Design Guidance:

- 7.1b** The location and mixed character of the adjoining areas allows for a contemporary and innovative design based on the highest standards of sustainability
- 7.2b** Massing and materials should consider the scale of the surrounding buildings: taller (not above 3 storeys) towards Vision Park and away from Station Road
- 7.3b** New development should provide active frontages onto Station Road and an attractive public realm and public spaces, with seating, good pedestrian lighting and public art
- 7.4b** The development layout should be permeable and integrate well with the surrounding network of streets and spaces in time
- 7.5b** Links and opportunities for extending the cycle and non-motorised users connections should be provided, especially through the sites to encourage active travel to Cambridge and Vision Park
- 7.6b** Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be provided and well integrated to enhance the design and biodiversity of the area.



Fig. 44 - Example of contemporary volumes and detailing that reflect the scale and lines of a historic context



Fig. 45 - Example of higher densities accompanied by careful relationship with the street



Fig. 46 - Engaging public art to create interest

8. Improving the existing residential areas

The village streets provide a great opportunity to reinforce the character of the village, through better streetscape and improved front gardens in most of the Character Areas (see Section 4), but especially in the Mixed Residential Areas.

Many of the streets have had poor maintenance with progressive loss of trees, abandoned green verges and standardised low quality street lighting. At the same time, parking pressures and house upgrades have often resulted in paving over the front gardens to satisfy parking needs. Over time, this is resulting in a significant erosion of character for the village as a whole.

At the same time, new aspirations for safe cycling are not being met.

While it is recognised that street improvement will be gradual, and often rely on the understanding and goodwill of residents for the treatment of front gardens, there will be occasions in which development, house upgrades and highway upgrades can provide the opportunity for improvement, even on a small scale.

Design Guidance:

- 8.1** Highway design and improvements should recognise and enhance the special character of the village, and adopt an appropriate style of street design (see Fig. 47 and 48)
- 8.2** Street lighting should be primarily low and pedestrian orientated, avoiding standard highway lampposts or mock historic styles
- 8.3** Trees and planted verges should be enhanced wherever possible with new native, biodiverse, climate resilient planting and occasional seating. Where appropriate they should integrate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)
- 8.4** Design attention should be given to the streets and routes more frequently used by children to encourage walking and cycling
- 8.5** Technical equipment, road marking and signage should have minimal visual impact, especially in the historic areas of the village (in purple in Fig. 15)
- 8.6** Front gardens make an essential contribution to the quality of residential areas: boundary walls and hedges should be retained or reinstated
- 8.7** Front parking should have permeable surface and be screened from the street by planting and fencing.

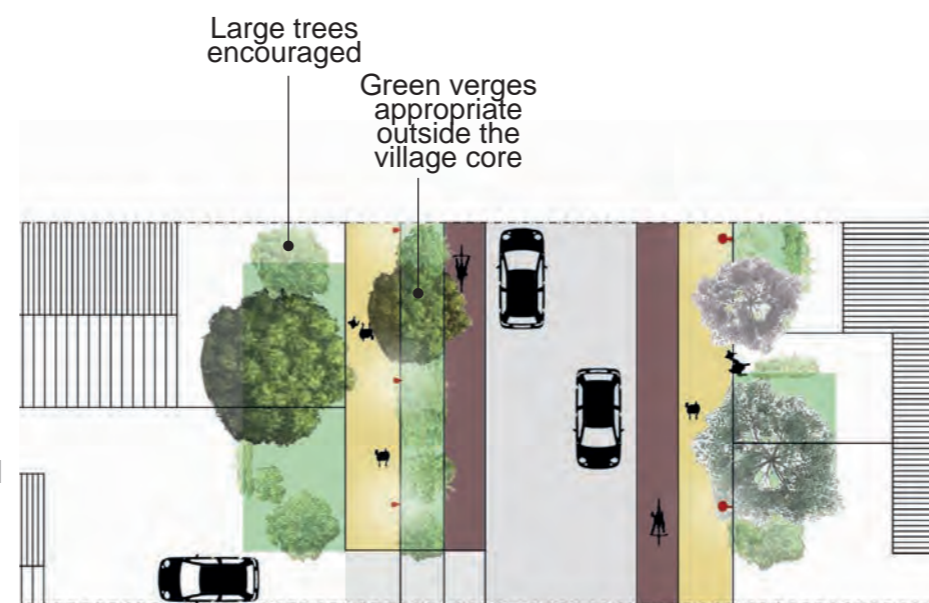
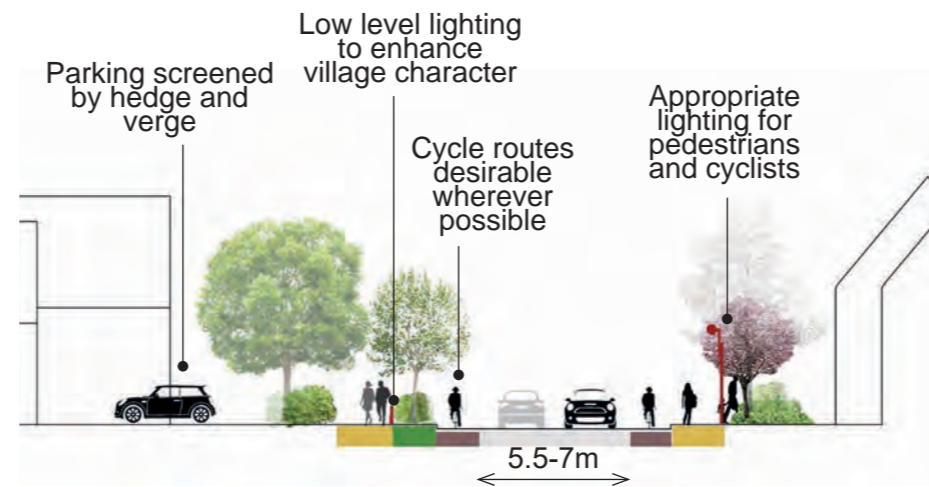


Fig. 47 - Appropriate layout for main residential streets

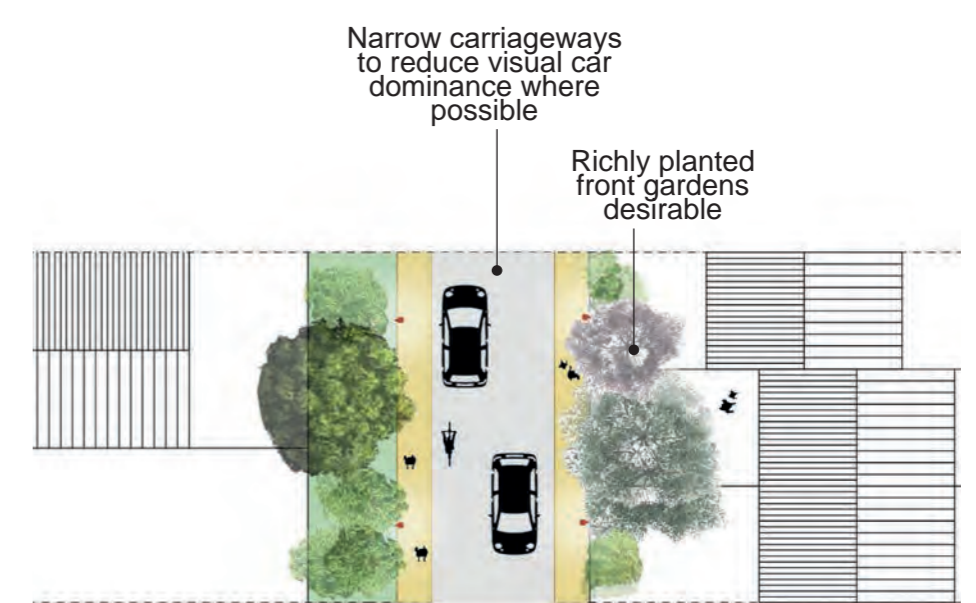
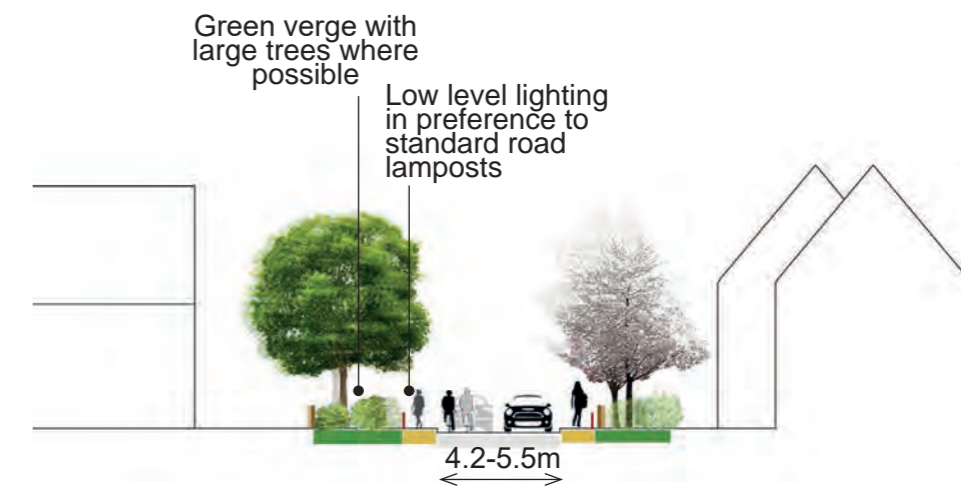


Fig. 48 - Potential design to enhance local residential streets



Fig. 49 - Planting in verges and front gardens is essential to street design



Fig. 50 - Every residential street should be safe for all cyclists



Fig. 51 - Seating and planting should be provided wherever possible



Fig. 52 - Wall or hedge screening the car parking from the streetscene

9. Appropriate infill, upgrades and extensions

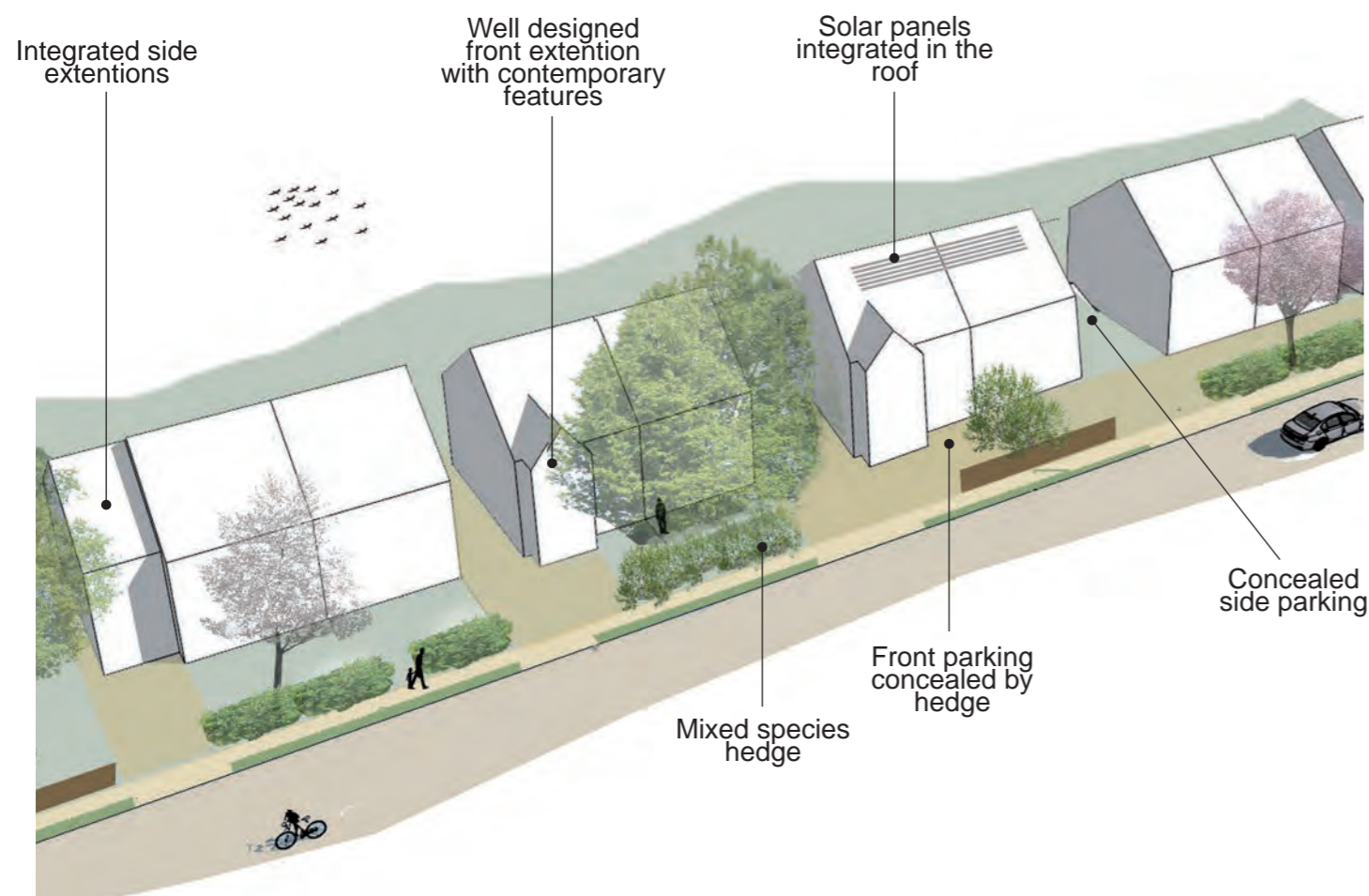


Fig. 53 - Potential improvements through upgrades, infill and extensions

In Histon & Impington, most residential areas have considerable variety and attractive details, some of which have their origin in the infill development building upgrades and extensions. Typically these provide an opportunity for creative and positive additions, provided that the scale and form of any infill or extension is appropriate to the local context and the existing dwelling. This is particularly important within the Conservation Area.

This does not, however, mean the new design should copy the original: contemporary detailing can add another layer of interest to the richness of the village.

Opportunities for gain and enhancement of biodiversity should be created wherever possible.

Design Guidance:

- 9.1 Infill development should adopt the scale, density and grain of the context area and units should not form a continuous perimeter nor block views or routes (even informal) through the village or to the countryside
- 9.2 All infill development should have a strong landscape framework, including native tree species, which can mature to a significant size where appropriate, and countryside shrubs to enhance biodiversity and climate resilience. Landscaping should integrate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- 9.3 Contemporary and innovative approaches to design are encouraged, as long as they are of appropriate scale, form, height and materials, and the heritage or character of the village are not affected
- 9.4 Contemporary design or well executed use of historical references should be approached as a way to add interest

Fig. 54 - Example of contemporary look in a traditional dwelling



Fig. 55 - Balcony extension adding interest to a plain building



Fig. 56 - Contemporary extensions adding variety to a basic volume



Fig. 57 - Example of new materials and simple, elegant detailing to complement the traditional buildings nearby



Fig. 58 - New porch and good quality windows

to the whole street and residential areas

- 9.5 The unique characteristics of Listed and Interesting Buildings (Neighbourhood Plan) should be respected and any upgrade or extension will need to be subservient to the existing building
- 9.6 Extensions should be appropriate to the original building and context, and avoid dominating the original building or the street - set back in the building façade, lower roofs (but similar pitches and geometry) and careful consideration of materials and details should be employed to create a context-sensitive design and respect for neighbouring properties
- 9.7 A very high standard of sustainability is expected, taking the opportunity to upgrade the efficiency of existing buildings, with sensitive integration of technology and equipment in the overall design and biodiversity enhancements integrated with buildings and landscapes.

10. Integrating new development

Fig. 59 - Essential design considerations for larger developments



Fig. 59.a - Open views over the fields to be retained across the whole site



Fig. 59.b - New streets to be a natural extension of the existing network



Fig. 59.c - Buildings to be diverse and developed in small groups to avoid creating suburban estates



Fig. 59.d - Bulkier volumes to be located away from prominent locations



Fig. 59.e - All new streets to be designed as green and pedestrian centred



Fig. 59.f - Gateway and focal open spaces to include plants and public art

A key objective of the Village Design Guide is the integration of new development in the existing settlement, ensuring it forms part of the village rather than a disconnected extension. It is important to respect the aspirations of the local community for development which is responding positively to its context and contributes to the overall character of the village. Provisions, through design, to safely enhance biodiversity are important to the future quality of the village and should be integrated in all new development.

Engaging and actively seeking feedback from the local community on matters of design would be a good way to ensure that the design is perceived as locally appropriate.

Design Guidance:

- 10.1** The treatment of the interface between the village and countryside is particularly important, as development should not be designed to physically 'round off the village' but rather to allow for penetration of the countryside within the village
- 10.2** Sites should have planted and irregular 'soft edges' at the interface with the countryside and there should be open views across the whole site towards countryside and local landmarks
- 10.3** Any green buffer between new development and the existing built up area of the village should be intended to protect privacy and should not isolate the new community
- 10.4** The street networks should be a natural extension of the village and a network of pedestrian routes and cycle ways should connect with the rest of the village and community facilities/ services
- 10.5** The treatment of main road frontages should be well integrated in the street network of the village and retain existing hedgerows and planting
- 10.6** Climate resilient native, locally occurring species should be used where possible and green spaces should contribute to increased (net gain) biodiversity for the area. Green spaces play an important role in surface water drainage and should be designed as part of a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) approach
- 10.7** Three storey buildings are considered atypical for Histon & Impington, and not readily acceptable - however, it is also recognised that in certain circumstances it may be possible to insert them as part of a carefully planned and landscaped development
- 10.8** New houses should embrace the principles of life-time accessibility and adaptability to suit the changing needs of occupiers
- 10.9** Local features, materials and detailing should be used preferably in a contemporary and innovative design, with a very high sustainability standard
- 10.10** Car and cycle parking and garages should have minimal visual impact
- 10.11** Bins, cycle parking, meter boxes and other infrastructure should be integrated in the design.

Indicative site

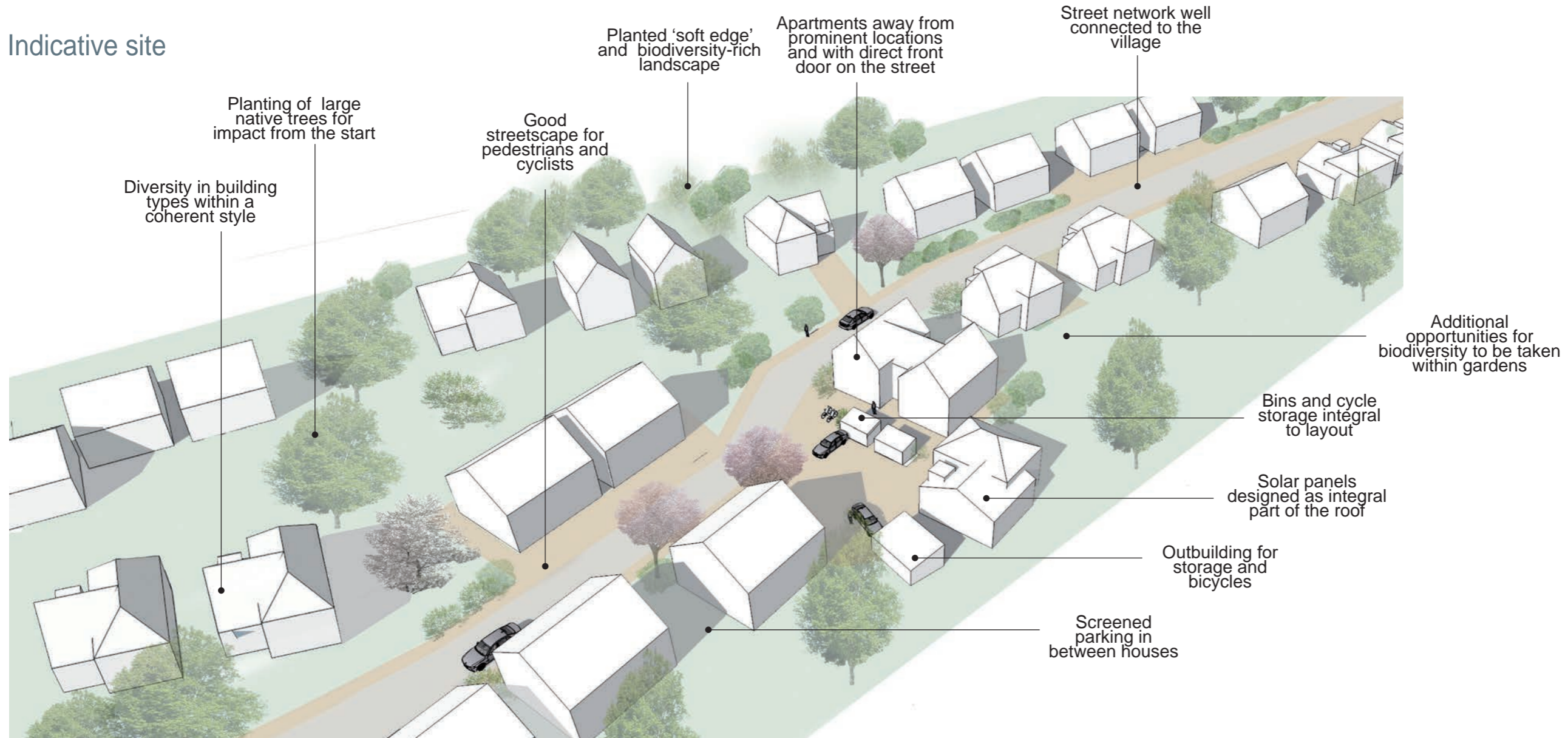


Fig. 60 - Elements of an appropriate layout that respects the nature and design qualities of Histon and Impington



Fig. 61 - Street design that embraces the informality of the village



Fig. 62 - Strong landscape and big trees from the outset



Fig. 63 - Mixed planting towards the street creates a positive soft frontage

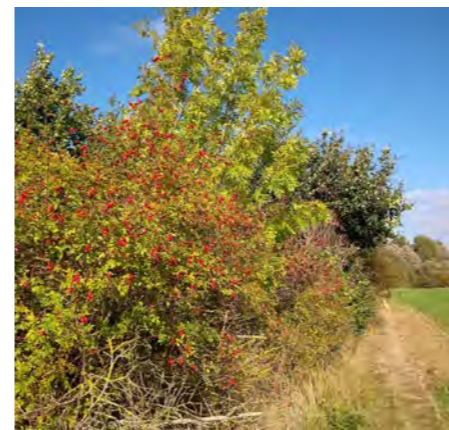


Fig. 64 - Biodiversity rich shrub planting is a haven for countryside wildlife

11. Appropriate materials and details

Choice of material is fundamental to good design. The village of Histon & Impington is characterised by variety of materials and attractive detailing. Whilst this should be reflected in larger developments, the introduction of too many contrasting materials in an individual building should be avoided.

The emphasis should be on the use of high quality materials that reflect the local area. The key to all material choice is not only the quality of the selection, but how the detailing has been thought about and ultimately crafted: special detailing creates individuality and surprise, and is one of the typical features of Histon & Impington .

Opportunities should be created for enhanced biodiversity within buildings, fencing, gardens and open spaces.



Fig. 65 - Recent house set in the landscape with large windows, balconies and attractive roof articulation



Fig. 66 - Attractive curved frontage and windows, with red brick detailing



Fig. 67 - Elegant combination of large windows and roof geometry



Fig. 68 - Corner windows and terraces are positive features



Fig. 69 - Good use of contemporary windows with a traditional built form



Fig. 70 - References to rural architecture can be well executed - with massing, materials and detailing appropriate to the context



Fig. 71 - Good use of landscape when there are no front gardens



Fig. 72 - Car parking could be screened by rich landscape



Fig. 73 - Taller volumes to be limited and well integrated in the landscape

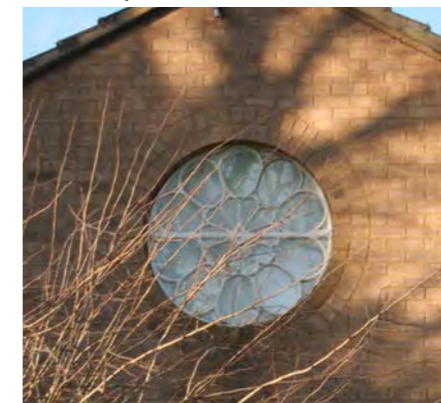


Fig. 75 - Fine details reinforce the individuality of the village



Fig. 77 - Solar panels and other equipment should be well integrated



Fig. 74 - Pattern of red and pale bricks frequently found in the village



Fig. 76 - Elegant mix of materials with a strong geometry



Fig. 78 - Good contemporary detailing in the porch

12. Inappropriate design approaches for Histon & Impington

Building massing and layout

The character of the village is in the diversity of buildings and in the overall dominance of two-storey buildings, tall trees and articulated roofs. It is therefore inappropriate to adopt repetitive linear patterns, continuous frontages, and buildings that dominate over the landscape. 'Mock-village' styles, and artificially diverse designs with multiple colours, forms and materials are unsuitable to the village.

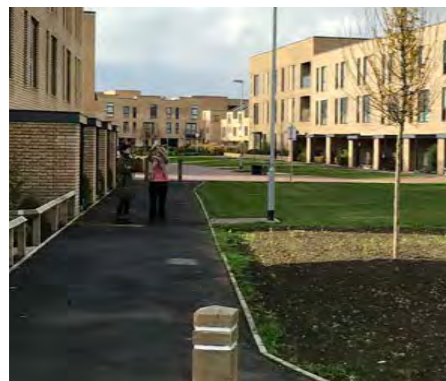


Fig. 79 - Strong urban frontages and dominance over landscape



Fig. 80 - Highly repetitive layouts.



Fig. 81 - Long linear alignments with repetitive housing forms give a suburban feel, even with lower rise buildings and pitched roofs



Fig. 82 - Corner blocks with lit stairwell are unsuitably suburban

Materials and detailing

Fine detailing is an essential element of character in the village, and featureless façades, bulky windows-frames and heavy porches are inappropriate. Integration of car and cycle parking, bins, utility boxes and technical equipment is essential. Prominent parking areas or garage doors on the street should be rejected as they significantly affect the visual quality of the village.



Fig. 83 - Prominent garage doors on the street are to be avoided



Fig. 84 - The parking drive should not dominate the street



Fig. 85 - Blank parking areas are not appropriate in the village



Fig. 86 - Clutter due to lack of space for cyclists and utility boxes in view



Fig. 87 - Prominent electric box and heavy porch detail can spoil a facade



Fig. 88 - Lack of bicycle storage leading to conversion of the bin store

Streets and landscapes

The village has a woodland style of planting, so ornamental trees and garden shrubbery is generally inappropriate. Bare verges, lack of integration of appropriate drainage ponds, suburban wide road detailing with standard lighting and minimal planting are to be avoided.



Fig. 89 - Hard and compact frontage onto the countryside creates an unsuitable edge to village development



Fig. 90 - Standard lighting and lack of landscape create a suburban feel



Fig. 91 - Drainage ponds should not be isolated and fenced features



Fig. 92 - Bare verges left-over from highway design should be avoided



Fig. 93 - Ornamental shrubbery is not appropriate to the village

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